

RUFFDRAFTS

the DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA

SUMMER 2021

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of the DWAA*

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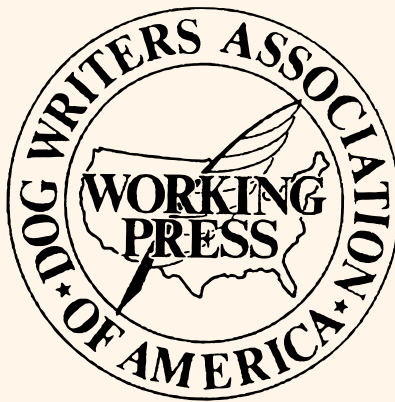
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Ruff Drafts

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Summer, July 3
Fall, October 2
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P R E S I D E N T ' S C O L U M N

JULY BRINGS US more than halfway through an outstanding year. “Outstanding” by definition means exceptionally good, and it has been that. Just a small example is that we writers have survived everything from lockdown and Covid, to malaise, illness, political upheaval, depression, job loss and procrastination. So, what now?

Let’s get to work.

I, for one, am thrilled by the topic of this issue. The editorial team is astute. I believe that working dogs are underrated

“I believe that dogs should be allowed to be dogs, and that means giving them a job, as well as the tools to complete the tasks allotted to them. ”



Therese Backowski
and her dogs, Lucy
(L) and Hank

and less appreciated than they should be. Somehow, the general public sees them as exceptional, mystical, somehow, “other dog-ly.” They compare them to their own pets, whom they believe could never be so useful, or so obedient. These are the people that might also believe that training is a four-letter word. They expect their dogs to know what they should do to please them, without teaching the dog what that means.

It’s our job to translate the mystery into reality, and we do it well by writing about these dogs who, more often than not, are allowed to reach their full potential.

I believe that dogs should be allowed to be dogs, and that means giving them a job, as well as the tools to complete the tasks allotted to them. Obviously, some breeds are better suited to some tasks than others. I wouldn’t ask a Chihuahua to herd cattle, nor would I ask an Irish Setter to pull a sled in Alaska. It’s the owner’s task to choose a breed suited for the dog’s life with him or her. It’s our job as writers to help him understand how to make that decision.

The current trend here in the United States of forcing human emotions and expectations on dogs is one of the main reasons that so many dogs end up in rescue, or worse. Most of the time, those abandoned dogs would have been just fine in their homes with some “on the job” training.

Dogs need to work, and their work is invaluable to all of us. It doesn’t matter what the job is, be it family cuddler and walking companion, watchdog, hearing dog, mobility dog, or seizure alert dog, they need to do something. Unlike some people, few dogs are content to do nothing. If we don’t give them something to do, they will find their own entertainment.

So, my friends, write on. Glorify, but demystify the work that dogs do. Spread the word that they aren’t human, they are dogs, they are entitled to their “doglyness,” and that is a good thing.

Therese Backowski

Therese Backowski

DWAA President



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

MARGARET MEAD ONCE SAID, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Mead could have been referring to so many of changes that occurred in the world of animal-aided assistance. The history of almost every branch of service or working dog can be traced back to one or two individuals with a strong commitment to making life better for others.

According to the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, the ancient Greeks used horses to lift the mood of the severely ill. In the 1600s horses were used by physicians to improve a patient’s physical and mental health. The (American) Red Cross used farm animals to assist injured WWII veterans.

When Florence Nightingale noticed the positive impact small pets had on psychiatric patients, scientists started measuring anxiety and stress reduction in humans through interaction with animals. The concept became known as the Human-Animal Bond. Even famed psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud used his dog, Jofi, to help assess patient moods. If Jofi stayed right by the patient, he or she was thought to be relatively free of tension, but if he stayed at the other end of the room, the patient was thought to be very tense.

Since that time, much has been learned about the benefits that animals can have on physical and mental well-being, providing needed assistance to manage everything from turning on lights to turning off disruptive influences.

DWAA members are involved in many facets of the Human-Animal bond. I am no exception.

In 2001, I was recruited by my local Humane Society to participate in a personal skills development program. The program used certified Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) dogs to work with local Boys and Girls Club members to help them learn how to care for animals. Many of these children lived in homes without pets and had no idea how to care for a companion animal. For some club members, their only reference to dogs was guard or security dogs walking behind fences in commercial properties, often instilling in them a fear of large dogs.

After my Collie, Bailey, and my oversized Jack Russell, Scruffy, were certified as AAT dogs, my husband and I started visiting a Boys and Girls Club every other Wednesday afternoon, demonstrating the basics of interaction with a dog, including how to greet a strange dog, how to walk with a dog on a leash, how to greet others in public, dog nutrition, and so on.

While the program was a great idea, at 4:00 in the afternoon pre-teen boys and girls are not interested in sitting down and participating in another “instructional” experience. My Jack Russell, not at all impressed with chaos, often stood and barked out the rules to the kids, who really didn’t care. They were ready to run the halls and shoot hoops. We quickly decided that the dogs were better suited for a more sedate AAT environment.

See FROM THE EDITOR pg 25 ►

▼
Merrie Meyers and
her dog, Sunny



MEET THE AUTHORS

of the DWAA

— by —

LISA BEGIN-KRUYSMAN
PUBLISHED AUTHOR, DWAA FACEBOOK PAGE MANAGER
AND DWAA BOARD MEMBER

Meet DWAA Author Beth Cherryholmes Miller

B

ETH CHERRYHOLMES MILLER is the President and CEO of Wagtown, a 501 (c)(3) organization with a mission to create Authentic Dog Friendliness. According to her website, “Wagtown sets responsible and genuine standards for the term, ‘dog friendly.’ Our mission is to lead the movement to create a Wagtown® community for everyone. To do this, we advocate for dog-friendliness through research, consulting, leveraging big data, education, marketing, and empowerment.” Beth’s book, *TUCKER FINDS HIS FOREVER HOME*, is self-published for children in grades K-4.

Q: Please share your inspiration for this book.

Wagtown’s K-1 Curriculum exceeds national standards and includes social-emotional learning. The book accompanies the learning materials and addresses dog abandonment, fear, confusion, hope, happiness and forever love. “Lessons Learned” are included with the book to reinforce important takeaways from the story. Our goal is to reach children and their families as lessons transfer from the classroom to the living room to educate and inspire humane attitudes and a better understanding of dogs and their lives.

Q: You self-published using the services of BookBaby. Can you share your experience?

I would recommend BookBaby to other writers IF their work fits within their specs for



With this issue of Ruff Drafts, we introduce a new feature, “Meet the Authors of the DWAA,” where we present some of the talented published book authors among the DWAA membership. Whether traditionally or self-published, writing for children or adults in genres including fiction and nonfiction, we are proud of our DWAA members who’ve been inspired to share their published stories with the dog world and beyond.

production (size, page count, graphics, finishing). The print quality was very good, and the proofing process was easy. With BookBaby, you have distribution (on demand) everywhere from Amazon and Barnes & Noble to small independent bookstores around the globe. My book was made available in six countries, so that may be a key factor for certain authors.

Q: Have you been published traditionally?

I have not published traditionally but would love to do that one day. I find the “find a publisher/agent world” to be shrouded and lacks a clear route.

Q: What are the challenges of promoting a self-published book?

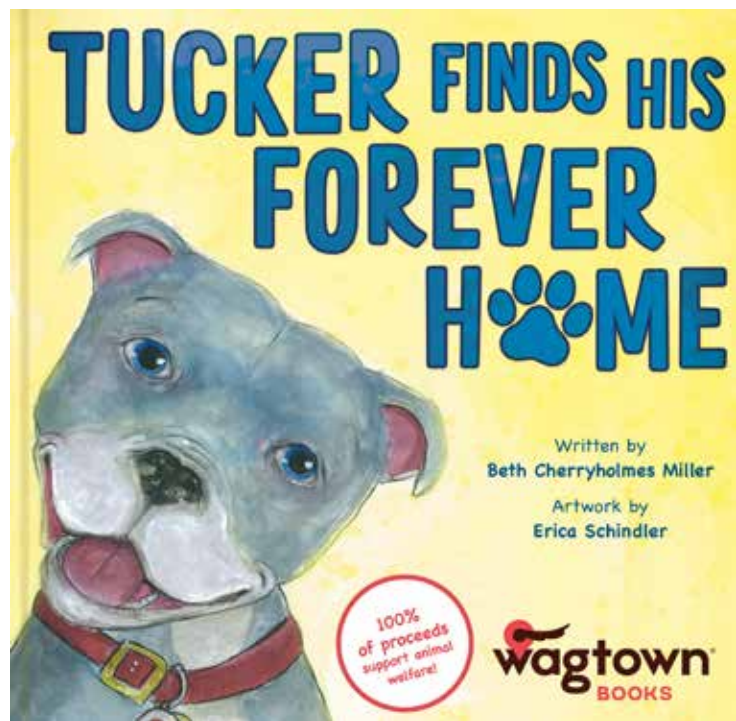
I’ve been in ad agency land for 30+ years, so the writing, editing, design, and prepress were easy for me. Creating a marketing plan, graphics, etc. was also familiar to me from my past experience in creative strategy.

Having to navigate the Amazon interface was cumbersome and the BookBaby backend is not user friendly for choosing categories to facilitate search results and sales.

I’ve learned a bunch from fellow authors about book signings and a few book shows. For the balance of 2021, I have monthly signings at local destinations in collaboration with other local writers and our local PBS affiliate (our curriculum is free to all educators via PBS Learning Media).

Q: Tell us about the dogs of your life.

We lost our 14-year-old Great Pyrenees in January of this year. We’ll have another one day. For now, we are fostering a service dog puppy in training. It’s a lot of fun and a lot of work. I’d recommend it to anyone, unless you will be crushed when they



 <https://www.wagtown.org>

 [wagtown.org](https://www.facebook.com/wagtown.org)



- ▶ leave you at one year. Ask me later how that goes for us!

Q: What benefits does the DWAA provide for you as a writer?

I have been lucky to have a group of experienced writers at my fingertips via DWAA. I find myself intimidated by my ignorance, but I feel like I don't even know what questions to ask or how to act on the advice. I should make better use of the membership. It has so much more to offer than I have pursued.

Q: Do you have other WIPs you'd like to share?

I have the outline for my second children's book. I expect to launch that in 2022 along with a curriculum for grades 3-5. In addition, I now host a weekly Facebook Live show called "Wagtown Wednesday" to showcase and inspire ways to make a difference each week. I'm developing a curricu-

lum for adult education and CEUs at the moment. That program will launch later this summer.

Other than that, I have short stories submitted to Chicken Soup for the Soul of Dog Lovers. Fingers crossed that I can achieve inclusion in the book.

Thank you, Beth, for sharing your publishing journey with your colleagues. We wish your service dog trainee all the best and hope a forever dog graces your life when the time is right. Beth would like to note that 100% of the proceeds for TUCKER FINDS HIS FOREVER HOME benefit animal welfare projects and programs. The book is available with my "Tucker to the Rescue" kit, a marketing support resource for animal heroes...also free.

Meet DWAA Author Susan Hartzler



READ ON TO LEARN about the publication path of Susan Hartzler, a member of the DWAA for 20 years and winner of the DWAA Special Award, Angel on a Leash in 2012. Susan's Memoir, I'M NOT SINGLE, I HAVE A DOG was edited by DWAA member Brian Duggan, editor of the Dogs in Our World Series for McFarland & Co., Susan's publisher. Below Susan talks about the birth of her first book.

Q: Have you always dreamed of being an author?

Yes, but I have wanted to write a book since my third-grade teacher told me to be a writer when I grew up. I just needed to live to have something to write about!

Q: How did you find your publisher?

I'd spent many years trying to find an agent or a publisher for my first memoir without any luck. So, I decided to self-publish. I was in the process of researching how to do it when I saw a post on the DWAA site about a publisher looking for stories about the bond between pets and humans. I submitted my manuscript, and the rest is history!

Q: What did you learn about the publishing industry while on submission of your manuscript?

That it is a slow process which requires patience, much like dog training!

Q: What advice would you have to someone who might be thinking of writing their own memoir?

I'd say be tenacious. You have a unique story to tell. Take classes, find coaches, do whatever it takes to learn the craft of writing so that you can tell your story in a compelling way.

Q: What value does DWAA membership provide you as a writer?

My membership is invaluable. I wouldn't have gotten a book deal without it! My gratitude is included in my book's Acknowledgments.

Q: Tell us about the dog of your life.

When I got an Australian Shepherd puppy as a gift, I named her Paige Turner and told her she was going to get me a book deal. And guess what? Four months later I signed the contract for I'M NOT SINGLE, I HAVE A DOG: DATING

TALES FROM THE BARK SIDE. My other Australian Shepherd, Seven, is a former show dog who continues to inspire me. Both are professional actors, models and therapy dogs who share their love with special needs children. They follow in the paw steps of Baldwin, who is featured in the book, and Bliss, my first Australian Shepherd. My memoir covers the life of my first dog as an adult, Blondie, a pound mutt and mentions my childhood dog, Siesta, who taught me the real meaning of love.

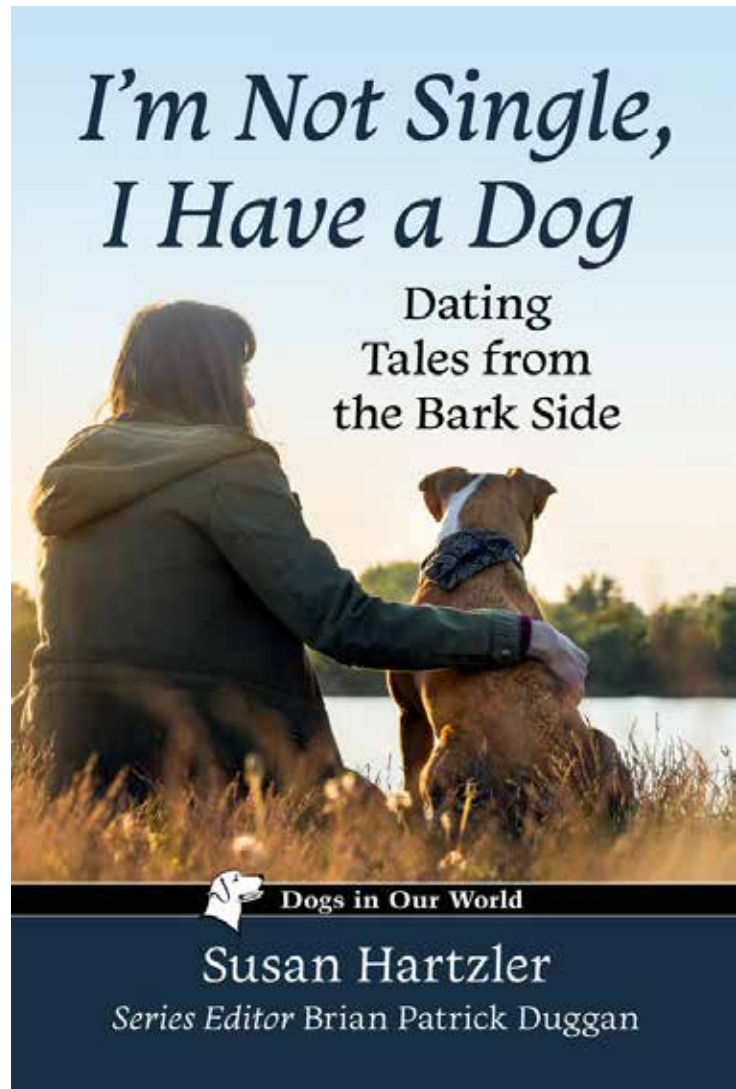
Q: Do you have any other projects in the works?

Yes, I am currently working on my next memoir titled *Becoming the Person My Dog Thinks I Am*. This book will cover the three years I spent overseeing my father's care at the end of his life. I couldn't have done it without the love of my rescued Puli, Baldwin. My next book will be about my amazing Australian Shepherd named Bliss called *Confessions of a Dog Momager* and will cover her acting and modeling career.

Q: Do you have any advice for someone who wants to write a memoir?

Writing a memoir is tough so my suggestion to anyone embarking on that journey is to take your time. I personally took a lot of naps and shed a lot of tears while writing my book. To quote Ralph Waldo Emerson: "It's not the Destination, It's the journey." Enjoy every moment of your writing journey and you will be successful no matter what!

Thank you, Susan, for sharing your author's story. We wish you the best on your new book and all your future endeavors. We are so happy to hear of the important role the DWAA played in your authoring journey! ■



<https://susanhartzler.com>

Everyone loves a good dog story and the behind-the-scenes tales (pun intended) from authors who've persevered in securing a literary agent and/or a publisher. Our new "Meet the Authors" feature will spotlight DWAA members authoring a book in any dog-related genre, Fiction or Non-Fiction, who are interested in sharing their personal path to publication.

Please send inquiries to RDeditor@dogwriters.org

LON HODGE

10 Things *a* Service Dog Handler Wants You *to* Know

INSIGHTS INTO WHY SERVICE ANIMALS ARE SO IMPORTANT
TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS

N

INE YEARS AGO, I began using a canine helper to make public access easier for me. Now, the use of dogs to assist people with disabilities has exploded. Service dog training agencies have popped up everywhere and have become increasingly specialized. Today, you can find assistance dogs that help those with sight issues, autism, hearing impairment, diabetes, seizure disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries, and mobility problems.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is defined as a dog that has been independently trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

As the number of service dogs increases, so does the number of counterfeit teams. This has put an undue emotional burden on teams that have spent months or years in training. Suspicion of fraud and fakery abound because of a lack of information and proper training about "real assistance animals" and teams.

Almost every negative encounter in public—and there have been dozens over the years—stems from two sources: People are faking disabilities and businesses are skeptical of service animals because of bogus representations. The only answer is education and awareness.

Here are 10 things you should understand and share about service animals, who make life easier for those who rely on them to help navigate life as easily as abled people often take for granted:

1. My service dog Mae is akin to medical equipment, just like a wheelchair, crutches, or an oxygen tank. She is medically necessary and anywhere in public that medical equipment is allowed, so is my service dog. Yes, she is a sensitive, sentient being, but please treat her like medical equipment. You would not walk up to someone you don't know and ask questions about their wheelchair, or handle and inspect it. Please don't touch, talk to, pet, or otherwise engage with a canine partner. I would add "without consent," but there is rarely a time you should engage a handler or their assistance animal. It is hard for animal lovers to pass up a chance to interact with a well-behaved and attractive dog, but any interruptions stymie my ability to get on with my day.

2. There are no formal papers for a service animal. My first dog, Gander, was trained by a certified trainer and passed a rigorous public access test. The certified trainer, working for a certified agency, was required to make sure my dog was able to do his job and be as invisible as possible in public while working. He performed over 50 difficult

In recognition of all those who are facing the challenges of PTSD, Mr. Hodge offers some insight into why service animals are so important to our nation's veterans. Hodge served in the Army and was in the medical corps for six years. He then entered officer candidate school and became an ordinance officer. His first service dog was Gander, and he is currently training with his second dog, Mae.

behaviors needed to pass his final exam. He could back up in a crowded space, load and unload me properly from a car, avoid any food or strange objects on the floor, and sit and stay without me in sight for 15 minutes in a public place. He was expected to position himself under tables in a restaurant and quietly perform many other tasks directly related to my specific needs. If a dog has papers or certifications (there is really no such thing for service dogs), they have no legal weight. Business owners may ask only two questions: "Is that a service dog?" and "What tasks does he perform for you?" There is a movement afoot to develop enforceable standards, but yet, if the dog is not disruptive and the handler can answer those two questions, you must allow access. You must assume the dog is legitimate.

3. My dog Mae goes where I go. She has the same rights as I do. It is my responsibility to see that she does not infringe on anyone else's rights. I understand some folks are afraid of dogs and that some religions even have taboos against them. I do my best to respect those boundaries, but I expect the law to be followed. I work hard to remain calm and educate those who do not know or understand the federal rules of access because we are all in this together. But not every handler has committed to be a public educator. Most just want to get on with the business of daily life. Some handlers may become angry, combative, or litigious. The Department of Justice can sue and fine you up to \$50,000 for denial of access and even more for subsequent violations. In some states, interfering with a team is a criminal offense.

4. In public, service dogs with their handlers are always working. My service dog in training has the most inviting demeanor and lovable face of any animal I have ever owned. That, and our

seeming gregariousness in public, make it hard not to engage her. Because she has several trusted friends who can interact with her, it might look like she is not working. She is always on duty. Those who know us understand that she will drop everything—even beloved toys, food, or tennis balls—to attend to my needs. People often whistle, click their fingers, bark, pet, call her, or try to feed her treats. ONLY if you see a patch that says "ask to pet" should you request permission to interact. The handler will correct the dog for sniffing you or doing anything inappropriate. These dogs rarely lose focus, but if they do, please ignore the dog and let the handler engage him or her again. Please don't ask a dog to sit, shake hands or do tricks. He or she is a professional and speaks a professional language. Most of the time, he or she will not respond to your requests. Don't feel ignored. The dog is on the job and loyalty belongs to the handler. Gander was spoiled beyond belief. Mae, my current pup, is too.

5. Service dogs are loved beyond measure and are given lots of attention. Recently, there was an alarm in the complex where I live. The noise was deafening to me, so I cannot imagine how terrifying it was to Gander. I rushed him outside and held him until he stopped shaking. My dog is well fed and massaged twice daily (to connect and to check for problems). I put protective waxes and creams on paws depending on the weather. I would stand in front of a speeding train to protect my dog. I think most handlers feel the same. We are grateful and protective. I spend all day with my pup, and we have a special way of communicating that alerts both of us to the needs of the other. I know when Mae is tired, hungry, thirsty, afraid, or bored. I attend to her needs the way any good father or mother would care for a child.

► **6.** We are a team. Please never separate us. In case of an emergency, make sure we stay together. I do not have a part-time disability; I need my dog. Should I be incapacitated, make sure that my dog is there to assist when I recover.

7. Service dogs, emotional support dogs, and therapy dogs are not alike. There is no training required for an emotional support animal (ESA). An ESA is there to provide comfort and reassurance to the handler. If recommended by a physician or mental health professional, they can live in HUD housing even if dogs are prohibited. Some training and certification may be expected of a therapy dog. The job of a therapy dog is to visit people in hospitals, disaster zones, independent living facilities, and such. They enjoy no protection under the law. A service dog may cost from \$10,000-\$40,000 to train and will be in full-time classes for a minimum of six months to two years. A service dog is fully protected by federal and state laws.

8. Not all disabilities are visible. Often, people ask me why I need a dog. Please don't ever do that. People will remark: "You don't look like you need a service dog." My reply is always: "That is because I have a service dog." I am in constant pain. I cannot take medication for my autoimmune issues. I have numerous injuries that limit my mobility, and I have debilitating PTSD. My dog mediates all of these issues. Every handler I know with severe PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and many other issues has told me that they would not be alive if not for their dog. Without Gander, I would have surrendered to the wars within long ago. Note: A service dog does not need to be wearing a vest in public, but it's always recommended so people can recognize a professional right away. Also, a service dog does not need to be on a leash if their job requires them to be off leash. There's great controversy about this in the service dog community, but the ADA law is clear about this. Not having a dog tethered to them could be beneficial for people without ample use of their arms, with balance issues, or other disabilities.

9. Be aware of counterfeit service dog teams. Indicators may include begging for food, paying more

attention to others than to the handler, aggressive behavior, barking, relieving himself in a public space, and not keeping their feet on the floor, as well as a handler who has certification paperwork from an online source. You may ask a handler to remove a dog who is disruptive. You may not ask a handler to leave.

10. Everyone has the smartest and most unique dog that has ever lived. Dogs are family. They do not live nearly long enough. That said, please understand that the relationship between a handler and his service dog is unique. We are together all the time. We spend more time tuned into each other than to any other relationship in our lives. We speak a language with each other that has nuance, trust, and a love that can take years to develop. Honor that bond and welcome home Veterans who exited a deployment but may have brought the war home with them. The best way to thank someone for their service if they have a canine companion is to give them the space they need to return to "the world" and some semblance of normalcy. ■

Veteran and active duty suicide is now an epidemic. We can help reduce the numbers by recognizing the lifesaving power of a skilled canine companion. It takes courage to take a dog into public. It is a public admission that something requires assistance in our lives. Respect and encourage the bravery shown on these home-front battlefields.

TOM SHELBY

MICHELLE *and* ME



My two working dogs, Michelle and Mike, were both Dobermans. Michelle found two people alive and some not alive. Mike tracked a woman 11 miles. They were Search and Rescue (SAR) dogs.

As you're reading this, you are dropping about 40,000 dead skin cells a minute. Humans have about five million olfactory cells in our noses, Michelle had over 200 million. The part of a dog's brain that discerns what smells are, is about 40 times larger than a human's, relatively speaking. A person may walk into a room and smell a chocolate cake baking. However, a dog entering that room may smell all the ingredients in the cake.

When a dog smells where another dog peed, she knows the age, sex and health of the other dog. When you come home and your dog smells your pants, she knows where you were, who you touched and what you ate. Hearing is another sense where dogs excel over our capabilities. The sounds you can hear at 25 yards, your dog can hear at 100 yards. Mark Twain said, "If dogs could talk, no one would own them!"

All my searches were memorable, but I'll just mention the highlights of several. A father of two young children took a walk in the afternoon and didn't return. By the time I was called, it was about 10PM. The house was filled with neighbors trying to help. I needed a clean scent article, something ONLY touched by the father. He was a religious Jew, and the only reliably clean scent article was his prayer shawl at the top of a closet. Standing right next to the mother and two children so Michelle could eliminate them as needed to be found in case they had touched the shawl, I scented Michelle off it. She picked up his track on the door stoop (dropping all those skin cells every step) and headed to the right. I had her on a 40-foot leash attached to a harness--the harder she pulls tells me she's on his track. After over an hour of tracking him through the suburban neighborhood, she took me into the middle of a street and lost the track. That had me thinking he got picked up by a car.

I went back to the house and restarted her leaving the house, but this time going to the left,

to let her air scent off leash as the breeze was coming from that direction. A half hour later I was in a park when Michelle's neon glow ring--which was on her neck so I could see her movements in the dark--started darting around instead of walking. She had picked up the scent! A few minutes later she came back and led me to him. He was lying on his back with a plastic bag over his face. It was now about 4AM in November, and between the cold and my exhaustion I was initially freaked out thinking I was looking at some kind of alien, till I realized it was a plastic bag on his face. The cop with me said, "How come you're acting so happy and giving the dog treats when we got a dead body?" "We found him because of the dog, she needs to be heavily rewarded!" was my answer. Next was the awful task of telling a wife and two kids of the find. Over my objections, it was ruled a suicide. Who kills themselves with a plastic bag?

Once, during a bad snowstorm in NJ, Michelle and a bloodhound were interested in a particular tree, but conditions were so bad at that point the search was called off until the blizzard abated. When we returned to continue the search, we went to that tree to start. The missing woman was found hanging high in the tree. She'd committed suicide. After that I made sure to include hiding up high in trees as part of the training regimen.

Not all our searches have been so gruesome. One evening at about 8 PM, I got a call asking if we could search for a missing lady. Earlier in the day, she and husband were in the car and arguing about directions, at which point the husband said to the wife, "OK, you drive!" When she got out of the car he drove off (to punish her?) and came back five minutes later to pick her up. But she was nowhere to be found, and her husband swore she had to have been kidnapped. I scented Mike off the car seat, and he picked up her track immediately, which resulted in me being dragged 11 miles to her home. The wife was so angry that she hid when the husband came back for her, and then proceeded to walk the 11 miles to her home. At least it was a reasonably happy ending. ■

SUNNY WEBER

NOT *all* WORKING DOGS *have* JOB TITLES

Jessie was scheduled for euthanasia as a “behavior problem”—a separation anxiety nutcase, a house destroyer, a crazy bag of bones. He came to me for behavioral rehab. His intelligence, sensitivity, and reliability with all other animals and humans of all ages was almost missed—until he graciously showed me what he needed. I understood this was a dog with needs I could fill, as he could mine. I adopted him. With meaningful work, Jessie calmed and became focused. Soon he was my partner in any “job” I assigned him.

J

essie settled into my home for traumatized and fearful dogs, sick kittens, and unwanted adult cats. His stable personality attracted the flighty, brutalized, and anxious dogs I fostered. He assisted me in the socialization of feral dogs rescued by our shelter’s cruelty investigators. His large lab-mix size offered a physical barrier between the timid and me. Large or small, the victims of human terrorization cuddled behind him as they learned to allow my presence, and then my touch.

Jessie illustrated to student dogs how to approach me on their own and receive rewards for doing so. He showed the shy how to eat canned dog food off my feet and knees (for those who had been kicked), and finally out of my hands (for those who had been beaten). They watched as Jessie sought my attention and scratches where no dog can reach on their own. They copied him as he led them onto unique substrates, into novel surroundings, and together they discovered new scents around our home and yard.

Finally, fearful fosters submitted to leashes and learned to enjoy walks—because their idol did. Courageously, the inexperienced ventured

out into our park and neighborhood at the side of their protector. Each was eventually adopted into a loving, patient home, and I continue to hear from adopters who thank me but should thank Jessie.

Our shelter had an extensive humane education department, and I was an instructor for all ages of humans in both domestic and wildlife needs and issues. The kids of Critter Camp adored him and were thrilled to be able to “train” Jessie as they learned positive reinforcement techniques. They could safely hang on him and he soaked up the attention of so many children that photos show only his head poking out of tangles of tiny arms and smiling faces on top of tumbles of little bodies.

The shelter used Jessie in community events, fundraising, and printed promotional materials. He even starred in a television commercial featuring animal characters from canine, feline, avian, reptile, and cavy persuasions. Jessie was the “director”—wearing headphones, cool sunglasses, and in charge of the control booth filming, with his large front paw pushing the sliding action lever.

Jessie was the “comforter-in-chief” for homeless kittens. He magnanimously laid on the





floor in my kitten room and allowed orphans of all sizes to approach, climb up his round ribs, perch on his head, and swat at his slowly wagging tail (an amazing feat for any lab!). For adult cats he made non-aggressive movements until he laid on the floor and encouraged them to approach. Our cat and kitten fosters left our home ready to be included successfully in families of mixed species.

Jessie also served as a visitation dog with elderly residents of senior facilities, where his manners were gentle and effusive for people forgotten about in their own society. The lonely interacted with Jessie as he brought up long-ago memories of their own dogs in days they once actively shared with pets and people. He was one of the few dogs allowed in memory care centers where he benevolently faced dementia patients. He calmly dealt with pounding pats, subtle pinches, erratic movements, and verbal outbursts. He seemed to know that his equanimity could bring peace to the troubled minds and uncontrolled bodies of people whom age had ravaged.

Jessie was my muse for my books, *Beyond Flight or Fight: A Compassionate Guide for Working with Fearful Dogs*, and *City Dog Walking Safety & Etiquette*. He was the star of both books and provided motivation for me to try to make sure no other dog with such talent, love, and right to life would be bypassed again.

In his youth, Jessie was bright, fun, incredibly athletic, playful, and demonstrated a distinct sense of humor. Yet he was also empathetic and

able to read what each animal or human needed from him. He embodied the best of all species—in patience, tolerance, respect, altruism, and loyalty. Jessie had the extraordinary ability to focus on anyone who needed him and became what was required—a rough-housing dog wrestling partner, a tender bodily shelter for the abused, a child's humble companion, a mellow presence for fragile humans, a kitten climbing tower, and especially, a trusted best friend to me. I relished our partnership and knew how rare a dog Jessie was.

At the age of fifteen, his poor old body was ravaged by arthritis, dementia, deafness, blindness, and kidney failure. He died in my arms and under my tears. I was blessed with fourteen years of his remarkable love and companionship. Jessie was a once-in-a-lifetime dog, business partner, and life companion who never asked for more than what he gave. Although highly intelligent and easily trained, Jessie instinctively knew what cannot be trained, and he mastered the cognitive and emotional intelligence that is often missing—even in many people.

Jessie was the quintessential “working” dog—able to contribute to the human/animal bond in phenomenal and widespread ways. He left the world after making his influence felt as an impeccable ambassador for unwanted animals. He increased the humaneness in all who knew him. I am bereft without my Jessie, but the memories live on.

Not all “working dogs” have job titles. But all dogs find ways to give, if we humans give them the chance at life that each deserves. I was simply Jessie's assistant. He did the hard stuff. ■



ANNE MARIE DUQUETTE

the SONG of SOLOMON



M

Y FIRST SERVICE
DOG PARTNER, AKC
German Shepherd
“Renegade Striker,” spent
most of his life keeping
me on my feet. With his
all-black furry muscles,
he towed me here, there,
and back again, for I’m

a Disabled American Veteran with a damaged leg. Striker kept me walking, off my cane and crutches, and out of a wheelchair. He had a valuable ability to assess his handicapped partner’s balance problems (mine) and instinctively correct them. I never fell once in all my years with him, thanks to his quick instincts. He was one very special “good boy!” But his black nose started getting grayer and grayer, and I knew it was time to retire him.

I wasn’t anywhere near ready to jump into all the work needed with a new service dog—the long learning process of building the absolute trust in each other necessary for a successful, safe partnership. I went back to my canes and crutches. I knew my good boy and I wouldn’t have much time left together, so I spent it all with him. Striker was old now and needed me. A new service dog was the LAST thing on my mind.

In the meantime, I was doing a book signing for California’s “Costal German Shepherd Rescue” to help support the cause. A woman showed up with a one-year old, all black German Shepherd; skeletal, filthy dull coat, scarred, and flea-ridden.



In the Bible's "Song of Solomon / Song of Songs"
From the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon (1:5)
"I am Black & Beautiful."

▲
Striker

◀
Sheba

They wanted to surrender her, AKC papers and all. The volunteer told them that their shelter was full, and asked that they please wait two weeks until space was available.

"Fine, then I'll just turn her loose in the parking lot!" the woman sneered.

My husband immediately took the leash and said, "We'll take her."

The grateful volunteer asked, "You'll foster her for us?"

Hubby replied, "No, she's ours." The owner shoved the paperwork in our hands and left. It was so strange because I'd just retired a black German Shepherd, and here was another one who fell into our laps! I named her Queen of Sheba and promised her the royal treatment the rest of her life.

At home, the first thing my husband did was give this painfully thin, dirty dog a bath. There was so many fleas on her that the rinsed water rained red with blood. I was shocked at this poor dog's suffering. Next, we headed to the vet for shots, blood work and deworming treatments. At home we gave her plenty of TLC and food. For the next few days Sheba passed pieces of bark and twigs in her stools; the diet of a starving dog. She also showed us that she'd never been in a house before. The TV confused her dreadfully, for she couldn't tell if the voices and sounds were real or not. And she didn't know how to use stairs in our two-story house. Sheba was overwhelmed at discovering a big, new, scary world that she'd

never imagined existed. Yet she was gentle with my children and got along with our other two dogs. She spent the first night on my bed at my side, and I was happy to welcome another pet to the family.

Right from the start, Striker took a particular interest in Sheba. He spent the summer training her by example. At home, she began to mirror his every move. She had no choice. If she tried to jump or bump me while playing, which could cause a fall, Striker disciplined her with barred teeth and growls. If she barked at home for no good reason, he took her to task. If she was afraid to do stairs with me, he showed her the way. I now had two black Shepherds, one at each side, and I suddenly realized what was happening! Striker was training his replacement! I started working with Sheba in earnest, both of us trusting each other more and more, while Striker kept watch.

Finally, I decided Sheba and I were ready to graduate to her first hardcore service dog solo effort. This was no quick grocery store run or sidewalk stroll. This was the big time; Sheba and me plus hubby for a three-day weekend in a Reno hotel. In a casino amidst crowds, slot machine noise, packed elevators, and her very first thunderstorm, my new K-9 partner did Striker proud. Striker had taught his student to shine! Sheba had the impressive intelligence of her breed, and although she could never equal Striker's phenomenal ability to problem solve, she came pretty



TIPS & TACTICS

HERE AT THE RUFF DRAFTS editorial desk, we spend our time reviewing and editing your submissions. We try to keep your story and voice intact while catching grammatical faux pas, misspellings and typos. It's not easy editing someone else's work. If you're part of any writer's group, you know how challenging it is to edit other writers, give feedback, make suggestions for improvement, and clarify what the author is trying to say.

If you find yourself in the unenviable task of editing something for a friend or colleague, here are some editing tips we've scrounged together from a variety of sources that may come in handy.

Be careful of how much you take on.

Editing takes a lot of time. If time is not something you have an abundance of, explain to the person who is asking why you won't be able to devote adequate attention to their work and give it the attention it deserves. Of course, if you're asked to review something in a work situation, say, from your boss, you can renegotiate your priorities, so you do have the time needed to do your best.

Why does editing take so much time to do correctly? You have to:

- Read slower than usual.
- Go back and forth in the text to check for consistency.
- Think about whether a situation or scenario is working, whether the correct word choice was made, or if a sentence sounds awkward.
- Make notes as you go so you can discuss your edits with the author or remind yourself of things you want to check on later.

Whether you are doing this work for free or for some compensation, it is a good idea to agree on a date when you plan to be finished with your edits. It's important to agree on what type of editing is needed before you start.

There are three types of edits.

- Content edits: the big picture.
- Line edits: the language.
- Copy edits: the grammar, spelling, syntax, style, and punctuation.

Each type of editing requires different skills at different times. For example, why worry about punctuation if the story needs to be reworked?

Determine where the author is in the development of their work.

Is this a first draft? If so, you might want to make sure they have already gone through a self-edit. If not, you could offer to do a big picture edit. If they've already spent time revising and reworking, then you won't need to make suggestions for major revisions that could change the arc of their story. This is when you'll get into the flow and word choice.

If the writer wants a line-by-line, word-by-word edit, it's important to consider how much time will be involved in such an undertaking. It could lead to a response of "I don't have time to actually get into the details of the piece, but I'd be glad to read it for big picture feedback, if you want."

Even when editing the work of others, set aside some time to do your own writing. You could:

- Choose the best time to write and then edit.

- Make a schedule of your writing days and your editing days.
- Set limits on how much time you will devote to editing each day, week or month.

Review the work before your start.

Many editors like to review the entire piece before making detailed notes about the work. Understanding the big picture before you start suggesting corrections (or changes) will help you decide if your ideas will make the story better.

While you are going through the piece for the first time, keep a paper or digital notepad handy to remind yourself to check back or review things after you're through. Microsoft Word lets reviewers make comments in the margin. Kindle will let you highlight passages. And, of course with a paper copy, you have both options at your disposal.

It's not your book, not your voice, and not your story to tell.

As an editor, your role is not to tell another writer how you would have written a passage, chapter or book. Instead, take the opportunity to help them write the story they want to write. Work within the world and the logical constructs they created. Can you imagine if J.K. Rowling's editor said no one would believe that there was an invisible train station at King's Cross?

Forget what you learned in high school English.

Don't worry about the story's symbolism, meaning or theme. Just focus on whether the story is coherent and if the writer met their objective.

Start with positive feedback.

Although the author is asking you to find what's not working, you'll also want to remain positive and provide some support. As an editor, you are entrusted with someone's fragile state of mind. Be gentle and polite. Ask questions, suggest ideas. Don't demand or order changes. Don't assume that the author knows what things he/she/they/they created are good or interesting. Find some of the bright spots to comment on, such as:

- The character development.
- An engaging plot.
- Descriptive sections.
- Humorous situations or dialogue

On the other hand, don't whitewash things you think are really problematic!

Highlight a recurring problem.

If the author uses something (say a word) over and over, you don't have to comment on every instance. Just make them aware of the problem and then let them search for the words themselves.

I have a personal aversion to using "had" in front of a verb, such as "had taken" instead of "took," or "had been" instead of "was." Whenever I see this crop up more than once or twice, I mention it to the author and expect that they will be on the lookout for these words.

Other people get hung up over *em* dashes and *en* dashes. Since I don't understand the whole concept, I let other editors twist themselves in knots over that.

Repetitive sentence structure is also annoying. Sentence structure should be varied in length and format. Don't always start with a noun. Don't always start with a descriptive phrase.

Dialogue should further the plot. (Show us, don't tell us.) Use dialogue as a way to convey ideas and emotion. It's more effective than narration. However, sometimes narration is necessary to advance the story, or to shift the point of view. It's also good to let people know what the characters are thinking, but too much thinking and not enough of what they're doing is also limiting. Undoubtedly, other characters are not mind readers, so dialogue and action is critical to furthering the story.

If something really isn't working for you, try to figure out why. Do the characters seem to behave in ways that are unlike ways they would normally act? Is a scene awkward or out of context or sequence? Is there an underlying issue? Share what you are thinking.

Serious issues might cause a hard stop.

If there are things that are just not working, you might want to stop editing and instead list your concerns and share them with the author.

MEMBER NEWS

KAITLYN WELLS

Award Winning DWAA Member
to be published by Philomel Books

DWAA member and awards recipient Kaitlyn Wells recently authored a picture book, *A Family Looks Like Love*. The book, richly illustrated by Sawyer Cloud, details the story of a young pup who looks different from her siblings but ultimately learns that love, rather than how

you look, is what makes a family. Philomel Books has acquired the book. Publication is scheduled for next Summer. Jane Startz at Jane Startz Productions represented the author and Atlanta Japp at Advocate Art represented the illustrator.



◀ Kaitlyn Wells,
courtesy of
Michael Jackson
Photography



◀ Sawyer Cloud

Sheba

▶ CONTINUED from pg 17

darn close! Because of Striker's meticulous training, Sheba became Registered California Service Dog #50. (NOT required by law, but it makes things easier due to fake service dogs.)

Striker crossed the rainbow bridge soon after. I was heartbroken, but I like to think he stayed around just long enough to train Sheba—for ME. Sheba adapted so well to her new life that she became my faithful service dog for many years. Only the scar on her nose was evidence of her past abuse. I couldn't believe how quickly our time together passed, and I had to retire her as well. I pampered her even more, gave her extra "lovings," and was heartbroken again when she left her poor arthritic body behind for good.

I lost one black German Shepherd, Striker, only to find another one, Sheba, abandoned in a parking lot. I know it was meant to be. Queen of Sheba rewarded my love with such loyal, deep devotion that, once again, I wasn't ready for a new service dog to replace her. I still miss her dreadfully and will always remember her heart's quiet courage. She survived her horrific past to thrive, always at my side, protecting my disabled body from harm. I still dream about her. Keep visiting me in my dreams, my Queen! ■

Tips & Tactics

▶ CONTINUED from pg 19

Instead of detailed edits, a section or chapter rewrite of the problem area might be in order at this point.

Create a checklist of things you want to remember when editing.

It's easy to miss some things. There are several checklist formats out there that you can use, or you can create one of your own. Two checklists that seem to be popular are C.S. Lakin's "*Critique My Manuscript*", "*Grammar Girl's Editing Checklist*" and Jerry Jenkins' "*How to Edit a Book: Your 21-Part Checklist*".

Whatever approach you decide to take as an editor, one thing is certain, it will help you become a better writer! ■

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

LooLoo

Hospice Heroine

MEET LOOLOO, my 13-year-old, 20-pound Lhasa Apso. She earned her AKC Canine Good Citizen certificate in 2017, and before the Covid pandemic struck, she spent three days every week visiting hospice friends. For a year she's been staring up at me from the door to the garage, wondering why we stay home all the time. Her eyes speak in a way she can't. She's saying, let's go, let's go.

LooLoo almost didn't make it through her first year of life. She wandered away from her home one night and ended up hopelessly lost. She survived as a stray on the streets of Los Angeles, which isn't easy for such a small dog, no matter how cute she is. Lhasa Happy Homes in Santa Monica saved her from a kill shelter, tended to the severe hip injury she had suffered somewhere along the way, provided a health clearance and later found a comfortable foster home for her.

My wife Debby and I brought her home one Sunday morning 11 years ago, with our two other rescue dogs in the back seat. LooLoo cried all the way home to South Orange County. That was a long, noisy drive.

Debby says that LooLoo has me wrapped around her paw. She does. She has the same bonding effect on the hospice and memory care patients we visit. One day LooLoo and I visited a senior living facility while the residents were playing bingo. I asked the residents if LooLoo could play. You should have seen their faces light up. With a little help from me, LooLoo did win that game and got applause and hugs from the whole group.

One of my hospice friends, John, built a strong friendship with LooLoo. The left side of his body was paralyzed, so she knew to lay next

to him on the other side without being told. He would hold a treat for her tightly in his right hand, while LooLoo tried to take it from him. This ritual was fun for John as well as therapeutic for his mobile side. Until the day she passed away in 2020, LooLoo's visits were critical for John's emotional state, since he had no family and friends nearby. LooLoo still sits by the door on Saturday mornings waiting to go visit him.

Not all pups are patient enough for canine-assisted recreation and therapy work. Neither are all humans. But I guarantee that if you and your pup put in the time and energy, your pup will enjoy the act of service as much as you do.

LooLoo has lived through the grief of losing human and puppy friends with determined resilience. The two pups who were her bunk mates in our home are both gone now and LooLoo has started to show signs of loneliness. Our hospice and memory care visits are starting back up, and we are bringing home a new big sister for LooLoo next week. Meet Tootsie, a chocolate Labrador Retriever. She will receive training and earn her AKC Canine Good Citizen certificate so she and LooLoo can put more smiles on more faces.

Before I go, I must recognize Jonathan Wood of Trinity Counseling Services for the big heart and skills he has in training pups and their owners. ■

TED SLUPIK

LESSONS *from* SOPHIE, a WORKING THERAPY DOG

TO EVERYTHING, THERE IS A SEASON...



▲
Evidence
of Sophie's
humorous love of
cardboard, and
her gentleness!

Sophie was my first collie and best friend. We were together for almost 14 years; 12 and a half of them doing animal assisted therapy work at hospitals, nursing homes, and schools. I wrote a book (*Sophie...best friends are forever*) about our journey to honor her memory. Listed below is an excerpt from the foreword of the book, written by Laura T. Coffey, a friend and also an author.

"Sophie loved to play and have fun, but she also loved to work. The rough-coated collie spent more than a dozen years of her life smiling, listening, and strengthening patients at hospitals and nursing homes. Medical professionals can see how much these well-trained dogs reduce stress and cheer people up when they're feeling low. Sophie helped blaze that

trail at an unusually young age for a therapy dog, and her legacy and undeniable impact are captured perfectly in Sophie...Best Friends are Forever. What a good, good girl." -Laura T. Coffey

The book details many of the qualities that Sophie taught me and showed to all of our family and friends. There are many books in the genre of "Everything in life, I learned from my (spouse, friend, dog, etc.)." It is a tribute to the companions that enrich our lives. The list below is of some of the traits Sophie had and is a brief summary of what I learned from my years with her as a therapy dog. With visits to hospitals, nursing homes, and schools still limited or restricted, I now treasure the memory of the "good old days" more than ever and hope that it can be rekindled soon.

COMPASSION

SYMPATHETIC PITY AND CONCERN FOR THE
SUFFERINGS OR MISFORTUNES OF OTHERS

During one of our working days at the hospital, we encountered a patient, Ken, who happened to be our neighbor for many years. We both knew he was terminally ill. Sophie insisted on staying in Ken's room longer than her usual time to offer support:

"We saw him two or three times before he died, and Sophie understood what was going on. She showed extra love and attention to thank him for his friendship over the years. Sophie made eye contact with Ken, expressing kindness, gentleness, and peace. The last time we saw Ken, he said his goodbyes, and Sophie and I walked away, very sad."

HUMILITY

A MODEST OR LOW VIEW OF ONE'S OWN
IMPORTANCE; HUMBLENESS

As Sophie got older and people and places became more familiar to her, she maintained her humble spirit. At some places we frequented, she almost became a rock star with people very anxious to see her. Sophie, however, never presented herself as the celebrity in the room, demanding attention. If you wanted to see her, pet her, or admire her, Sophie thought it was great. However, if you did not want to visit with her, that was fine too. Rejection never discouraged Sophie; she would happily continue on and trot into the next room, starting from scratch, hoping to make a difference in the next patient's life. She wanted to make each new experience and person into a new friend.

GENTLENESS

THE QUALITY OF BEING KIND, TENDER, OR
MILD-MANNERED

For a large dog, Sophie's physical presence did not overwhelm anyone. She would sit or lay next to anyone, curling up in a ball exuding gentleness for hours. If she encountered another dog who might not be so gentle, she would just walk away. She did not have a mean streak in her body.

OBEDIENCE

COMPLYING OR WILLING TO COMPLY WITH
ORDERS OR REQUESTS

Performing animal assisted therapy work required following a regime of rules that needed to be followed rigidly. All of these rules were created to make sure the people you visited with were safe. Sophie was exceptional in that once you taught her something she mastered it and always followed the rules.

HUMOR

THE QUALITY OF BEING AMUSING
OR COMIC

Sophie recognized that humor was an important part of life and enjoyed it in her many encounters with people she met. She always seemed to be smiling. However, she also had a playful and mischievous side. She had one vice... cardboard. Sophie loved cardboard and would take ►

“

Medical professionals can see how much these well-trained dogs reduce stress and cheer people up when they're feeling low. Sophie helped blaze that trail at an unusually young age for a therapy dog..."

LAURA T. COFFEY

- ▶ any opportunity to acquire and eat it. Toilet paper rolls, tissue boxes, backs of pads of paper, anything cardboard. She would secretly devour the cardboard and then sheepishly give me a “Who, me”? look when I discovered her lapse from her usual good behavior. The peak of her silly behavior was when she opened and emptied a box of bone china antique teacups and saucers that my wife had purchased at an estate sale. They were forbidden in the living room that Sophie was not allowed in. She very carefully took each newspaper of wrapped cups and saucers out of the box, unwrapped them, set them on the carpet, and once the box was empty, she devoured the box. What a sight it was to

come home to see all of the unblemished cups and saucers, piles of crumpled newspaper pages, and no trace of the box. Sophie simply looked away as if to say, “I have NO idea.....”

PATIENCE

THE ABILITY TO ACCEPT OR TOLERATE
WITHOUT GETTING ANGRY OR UPSET

If any lesson was a virtue during the Covid years, it was that you need to have patience. Sophie exhibited patience time and time again. Her initial training involved long days of learning special hospital rules. She was at my side listening to these training lectures and I wondered if she understood more than anyone would believe.

CONTENTMENT

A STATE OF HAPPINESS
AND SATISFACTION

Sophie knew there was a time and place for everything. There was a time to work and a time to play; a lesson that many of us struggle with. As in Ecclesiastes, “to everything there is a season”. We all need to learn to be content in our lives and to have a sense of balance between family, friends, and work. Sophie taught me what she knew. There was a time for her to work (visit) which was the highlight of her week and a time to rest. As her handler, I came to realize that the days of doing therapy visits with her were some of the best days of my life. I realize this now but did not at the beginning of our journey. I needed to recognize it while it was happening, as this joy does not last forever.

Fortunately, I realized that in today’s world, making a difference in people’s lives was an important lesson to teach. In our life, our gift is the gift of time. We use that time to meet and interact with people; working to make them feel better. If not physically better, at least emotionally better. Time is an important thing to share. From Sophie, I learned that money, awards, attention, etc. doesn’t define your life. Sophie could have been a dog that competed at dog shows, did agility, or conformation. Instead, she exhibited the true collie desire to have a job, and that job was to cheer people up, make them feel better, and make a difference in their lives. I will be forever grateful for the lessons she taught me. ■

Sophie... best friends are forever



Written by: Ted Slupik
Foreword by: Laura T. Coffey

From the Editor

► CONTINUED from pg 5

At the same time that the Boys and Girls Club program was rolled out, the Humane Society introduced Wags & Tales, an afterschool reading program in local libraries. The concept was simple, children would come to their local library and read age-appropriate material to an AAT certified animal. A local newspaper reported on the program, and it was well-received in the community.

As the community outreach person for the public schools, I was responsible for establishing community partnership. One of the school's board members asked me to investigate the possibility of adapting this program to the public schools. She had no idea that I was already involved as a volunteer.

Recasting Wags & Tales as an educational program took some work. In order for teachers to be willing to use the program, we had to tie all of the activities to state standards for reading and English, figure out the appropriate age group and develop training materials for teachers interested in using the program.

Perhaps the biggest hurdle was overcoming the “dog bite” apprehension of our risk managers and general counsel. That involved securing testimonials from other school districts already using AAT programs, sharing research papers on cognitive and language skill development and even filming the library program for a little show and tell. It took two years, but the program was approved in 2003.

Since my Collie was already certified, the Humane Society asked if I would serve as the first volunteer. On the day that the school board approved the program, Bailey and I attended the meeting as Wags & Tales volunteers. Bailey went up on the dais and greeted every school board member with a “sit” and a “shake.”

As Wags & Tales spokes-dog, Bailey worked with multiple groups of students. My favorite was a group of 9-year-old third grade boys who were reading at a first-grade level. When we began visiting the classroom,

the boys were terrified. Not one of these children had a family dog. Bailey, a tall, tri-colored Collie, seemed overwhelming to them. However, with a little peer pressure, we got them to begin helping Bailey sound out and pronounce new words so that we could read our stories. By the end of the semester, these same boys were clamoring for their turn to help Bailey read and laid all over him in the process. During another term, a class that included boys and girls and one crafts teacher, they made us a scrapbook of our experiences and included letters to Bailey written by the children. It was so special.

Just like Freud's Jofi, Bailey could sense stress levels and he zeroed in on those who needed him most. He seemed to get as much out of the interaction with the children as they did.

Bailey passed away in 2007 from bladder cancer. I retired him from his AAT reading job in 2006 when it became difficult for him to sit in the classroom for 45 minutes without relieving himself. However, his legacy continues. The Humane Society recognized him with a gold brick in their recognition plaza, and the program continues to thrive in schools.

Light at the End of the Tunnel

Our Dog Pack



RALPH PROTSIK

the GERMAN SHEPHERD

*For a breed with a dubious rep
How ironic when choosing to prep
A dog steady and wise
To be some human's eyes
At the top of the list is the Shep*



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